

Technology Marketing Minute

Quick Marketing Tips For Increasing Leads And Maximizing Profit



“My mission is to educate 100,000 IT business owners on how to generate more revenue, profits and success in their business,



to give 10,000 the tools, training and support they need to be more than mediocre, to save 5,000 from closing their doors or bankruptcy and to make 250 millionaires.”

— Robin Robins, President, Technology Marketing Toolkit, Inc.

Is This 4-Letter Word Keeping You From Believing In Yourself?

Last month I brought Tony Horton to speak to the Producers Club. In the rare event you're not familiar with him—even if only by name, due to the extensive advertising done by Beach Body—he's the star fitness trainer of the P90X home DVD workout series. On various fronts, it's the #1 best-selling home fitness program of all time, netting over \$500 million in sales; and that's NOT including the brand-new version, P90X3, that was recently released.

As part of his presentation, he conducted a morning workout for those members who cared to join us. The workout was definitely hard, but not impossible, and even at 8 months,



pregnant I was able to do all but one exercise since I've made a determined effort to, first, get in fantastic shape before getting pregnant, and then maintain my fitness through the morning sickness, tiredness, headaches and various delights that come with growing a person inside of you. (P.S.—There's a lesson there that applies to everything you do, every potential challenge or threat to your business. I'd suggest you take a moment to pause and reflect on what it is. I'm not handing it to you.) HOWEVER...

I DID catch myself during the workout turning to Andrea (standing next to me) and saying, “Yeah, I can't do that!” when he was demonstrating the next exercise. But, being the pig-headed person I am, I found that once I actually tried to do the exercise, I was able to without much difficulty. This got me



thinking: What else in my life am I instantly dismissing that I “can't” do before I've even attempted it?

One of the biggest hurdles I have to help clients overcome in order to be successful is getting rid of their ingrained, knee-jerk response to anything new or different that always starts out with “That will never work for ME because...” Often these beliefs are tied to what they think their customers will and won't do, pay or accept. On a recent Q&A call, a newer member asked for my advice on what to do since companies were no longer spending money on IT, choosing to buy computer equipment from Best Buy and moving to cheaper alternatives for tech support. My response was that, first, his statements are only true for HIM. Weather is local. I can, right now, point to hundreds of MSPs who are growing rapidly, selling managed services plans, hardware and other services at a premium rate and NOT losing customers to the phone company, Best Buy, Dell, etc. Does that mean he's not experiencing it? I have no doubt he is. But his question should have been, “I'm finding that I'm losing customers to cheaper competitors. What am I doing wrong?” rather than believing that's what EVERYONE is doing, thereby making him helpless in doing anything other than closing up shop. It's often been said that when Wal-Mart comes to town, it kills off all the small, local entrepreneurs running shops selling similar goods—again, that's not entirely true. They force the mediocre shops out of business who have nothing better to offer and who truly are no longer the best, most convenient, fun, etc., place to shop. The ones who specialize in goods and services you can't get at Wally-World, who provide a unique experience and who have worked hard to establish and maintain a loyal following, don't suffer a bit.

But, of course, if you choose the “victim” thinking that once a big competitor comes to town you're toast, completely unable to compete and without options, you might as well crawl into a Saddam-size (*Continued Over On Page 2*)

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Is This 4-Letter Word Keeping You From Believing In Yourself? (Continued)


hole and give up. This type of thinking that it's "impossible" or that you "can't" do something imprisons you. Shuts off possibilities and options. Causes you to dismiss ideas and strategies that you COULD actually profit from. You might be correct that your CURRENT services offering, target market or business approach is no longer viable or profitable—but all that is required is your flexibility in changing your approach. NO business isn't susceptible to change and competitive pressures. All of us, at some point, will have to evolve, grow, expand and change if we want to continue to be relevant to our customers and current trends—and wishing and hoping for the good ol' days when your current model worked is an exercise in futility.

Further, waiting around for "IF ONLY's" to happen is a death knell. IF ONLY customers would see the value in IT support. IF ONLY I had more time. IF ONLY I didn't live in such a big town, small town, on the East Coast, on the West Coast. IF ONLY I had better staff...more money...more time...better customers...less debt...more sales-ability. There is only ONE legitimate "If Only"; that is, "If only you had more skills and knowledge." THAT is fixable. Jim Rhone once said, "Don't wish for less problems; wish for more skills."

So back to the Tony Horton workout: It was an excellent reminder for me to 1) NOT prejudge my abilities before even ATTEMPTING something; 2) EXPECT to do things well and visualize success before getting started; 3) NOT create "problems" and inabilities before they happen. I'd suggest you



**Tony Horton,
Creator And
Founder Of
P90X**


use this as a reminder for taking a hard look at the "cant's" and "impossibilities" you're accepting right now, governing your daily actions. Maybe it's time you said, "I can...and I will." 

3 Easy Ways To Build Powerful Client Relationships

Since it's Valentine's Day month, I thought I would take this opportunity to focus a bit on building relationships with customers and give you a few keys to keep in mind throughout the year. Truth is, we could all do better at sending "Valentines" to our clients throughout the year. But here are some things to kick off ideas for building better relationships:

1. CONSISTENCY. This is the most basic, fundamental building block of trust and client loyalty. For you as a vendor, it's critical. We have a great relationship with several key vendors we consider "staff," like Joe Sessions at One Source, Jason Garber of AppCove, Austin and Jason who run our AV for events, etc. They've EARNED a high-relationship status because of one thing: CONSISTENCY. Consistently hitting deadlines, consistently delivering great results, consistently showing up on time, consistently making our life easier by not giving us problems, consistently going above and beyond. Most incorrectly consider this "operations" and not marketing. They couldn't be more wrong.

2. SAY THANK YOU. To date I've spent close to half a million dollars with BMW. Not ONCE have I ever gotten a "thank-you" with as much as a free oil change or car detail service. I recently had a member (rightfully) grump at me about one of our recommended vendors. This person invested a LOT of time and effort into getting this vendor several new clients and contracts that easily represent close to a million in service sales, yet they never got so much as a thank-you. This person is right: they should have been properly thanked (at a minimum) if not somehow compensated. This vendor's failure is horribly egregious because they just took a "marketing oil well" and plugged it by simply failing to give some recognition and appreciation.

3. THE UNEXPECTED GIFT. Sure, lots of people send out Christmas cards—er, "holiday" cards—once a year. If you're slick, it's a calendar or mouse pad. Big deal. That's expected. If you want to be smarter about this, divide your clients up into groups of most valuable to least valuable and craft a budget for client "Wow," sending gifts, tickets to games, dinner at a restaurant, etc. One member told me he makes an effort to find out the names and birthdays of the children of his clients, and makes sure he sends THEM a gift and card for their birthdays. But remember this: you can't fix a broken relationship with gimmicks, gifts or clever marketing. That's akin to an absentee parent trying to "buy" their kid's affection by showering them with presents instead of investing quality time with them. 



The Marketing GENIUS of the Month



“Thanks to Robin, we’ve we had nearly 50% growth in topline revenues this year and tripled profits (after a healthy take-home salary for me and my wife). We hired 3 full-time people last year and my entire team got raises—and we did all of this with me being out of the office 67 days in the year.” — Raj Goel, BrainLink

How We Were Doing, In One Word

I discovered Robin back in 2009. Prior to that, life was, in one word, miserable. Even though we had clients, we never achieved profitability. NEVER. And as our revenues fluctuated from month to month, I felt like a hamster trapped on the spinning wheel, always chasing after new clients. Even worse was the fact we were always fighting with clients to get paid. In 2009, we had a part-time bookkeeper who spent 30 hours a week invoicing and performing collections. Even our best customers paid us late, or demanded explanations for each and every invoice. Marketing? Well, that didn't even exist. We were in pure survival mode and needed help.

I Was Tired Of Being The “Best-Kept Secret” In New York City

After enrolling in the Toolkit, I did only slightly better than most. I actually DID implement some of it, but didn't follow it to the letter. Since money was short, I implemented e-mail broadcasts because it was the cheapest form of marketing I could afford. Next we tried postcards since they weren't too expensive; but after a year of sending those out, we stopped. I was trying to be cheap in my efforts and didn't really, truly understand marketing, throwing stuff up against the wall and seeing what would stick. This is my first piece of advice to anyone reading this: don't implement a marketing idea simply because it's cheap or easy. You have Robin's recipe, so follow it. Otherwise you'll just waste time spinning your wheels. Long story short, I decided to dive back into the Toolkit and, this time, be serious. Thanks to that refocused effort, we experienced several big breakthroughs that really changed our business for the better. Here's what we did...

Breakthrough #1: Getting Serious With Robin's Marketing

At the time, my marketing consisted of sporadic e-mail broadcasts that sometimes worked, often didn't. Hey, at least I was doing something! I had inconsistent messaging, low prices as a strategy to try and win business and didn't communicate anything other than “Brainlink is just a bunch of techies” on our web site and in our marketing materials. I looked and dressed the part of a struggling, small-time busi-

ness owner. Robin was offering a free 12-week Toolkit Implementation Group coaching by Tom Malesic, Rich Crockett and Sitima Fowler. That really helped set the stage for our CONTINUOUS and PERMANENT success.

Sitima's mini-Shock & Awe in a USPS mailer elevated our marketing chops. Rich's constant coaching and cheer-leading encouraged me to get TESTIMONIALS and use them in proposals, marketing kits and on our web site. And Tom Malesic's example of his book led me to write mine before I joined Producers Club; so anyone who thinks you can't have success without joining is mistaken. Yes, joining IS a good idea and has helped us tremendously; but Robin gives you everything you need to succeed in her Toolkit and Blueprint.

Breakthrough #2: Converting Our Business To Managed Services

Our bookkeeper was spending 140 hours per month sending invoices and trying to collect payment. I had heard that switching clients from break-fix or T&M contracts to MRR made other MSPs profitable, but it never made sense to me. Somehow, I was sure that would never work in New York. BOY WAS I WRONG.

Over 6 months, we proactively started a crusade within our company and switched ALL our clients to flat-rate monthly billing. As a direct result of these efforts, we reduced our monthly billing time from 60 hours to 6 and we eliminated the time wasted in collections. My second big piece of advice: don't think “That won't work here” without giving a strategy an honest try. You might be VERY pleasantly surprised.

Breakthrough #3: Our Book Launch And How I Generated \$918,036 In New Sales

Like many of you, I have spent decades in IT, becoming an expert in things that matter to my clients—but somehow I wasn't communicating it accurately or effectively, as evidenced by my struggle to get new clients and get paid. I specialize in IT and cyber-security (www.rajgoel.com is my web site as a speaker) and have been quoted and published in *Entrepreneur Magazine* and *Commercial Property News*. I have appeared as an IT security expert on *Geraldo*, *PBS's Nightly Business Review*, *WPIX TV* and the *Larry Sharpe Show*. I've spoken about IT security at conferences around the world such as The Global Business and Technology Association, The New York State Cyber Security Conference and ICT Cauacao; but that expertise never made an impact on clients and prospects. Again, it was simply because I wasn't “packaging” and marketing my expertise effectively, unable to turn that into paid IT consulting clients in New York City. (continued on back page)



The Marketing GENIUS of the Month (continued)



That's why I decided to write my own book from scratch. It was surprisingly easy (the whole book took approximately 60 hours from end to end with guidance and help from Jeff and others in the Robin Robins world). The results have been fantastic. Below are the three keys to that book being a HUGE success.

- 1. Book Launch And Signing.** We launched the book at The Friars Club in NYC (a well-known members-only club that I've belonged to for years). When you finish your own book, if you're proud of the results, then why not throw the biggest party that you can? You'll only be a "First-Time Author" once, and it's an incredible feeling. We strategically gave advance copies of the book to selected clients and centers of influence so I could interview them about the book at the launch. I hired a videographer to interview these people and asked them two questions. First, "What do you like best about working with Raj?" and second, "Why should people in your industry read Raj's book?" These resulted in instant testimonials that we use on our web site, Shock & Awe kit, press releases, etc.
- 2. Gotham Golf Sponsorship.** Every year my networking group has a golf tournament and, as sponsors, you are allowed to give away marketing materials. We spent \$1,500 on a sponsorship and gave away 300 copies of the book. I also donated copies of the book as raffle prizes.
- 3. Highlighting the book during my speaking engagements.** As a speaker, I do a lot of presentations locally and globally. Whether it's a webinar for IT companies, a seminar for prospects or a symposium on cyber-security, the book cover is on the first and last slide of every presentation. Depending on the

conference, I have even given away copies of my book or the organizer of the event has purchased books from me to give to all attendees. This really reinforces the message that the book is something they should read, and gives people an excuse to like and trust you more. So, how did we turn \$1 into \$47? Book production: \$3,500; Book launch at Friars Club: \$8,500; 1,500 books printed & given away: \$7,500. TOTAL EXPENSES: \$19,500. Currently signed MRR revenue directly attributable to publishing my book: \$25,501 per month x 36 months = \$918,036.

Some Final Thoughts

This year we had nearly 50% growth in topline revenues; but more importantly, we tripled profits (after a healthy take-home salary for me and my wife). WE HIRED 3 FULL-TIME PEOPLE last year. My ENTIRE TEAM GOT RAISES...and we did this with me BEING OUT OF THE OFFICE FOR 67 DAYS in the year. I traveled to 4 countries, 7 conferences, delivered 4 key-notes in 4 different countries, was profiled in the largest paper in Holland, and was on TV 6 times in 2 countries. Our goal for 2014 is \$1.1 million in revenues. When I hit it, I am sending a MAGNUM OF CHAMPAGNE down to Robin Central.

I don't know if other members leverage the full power of Robin's material and the Producers Club. Robin doesn't want this essay to be a promotion for the Producers Club, but I do want to mention that I've met some of the nicest, most generous and helpful peers there. Learning from them saves me a LOT OF PAIN, STRESS and FRUSTRATION. I know we're going to have an awesome year and a fantastic future—and I've got Robin, her team and the Producers Club behind me 100%. RR

Are You Registered For The IT Industry's Biggest Marketing And IT Sales Event Of The Year?



If not, what are you waiting for? Instead of spinning your wheels trying the same unsuccessful tactics over and over again, register for this year's annual IT Sales And Marketing Boot Camp. This IS the event of the year for you to see and learn from your best and brightest peers, as well as hear from some incredible authors, speakers and consultants. This year's theme is all about following the yellow brick road to fast, measurable gains in your IT business. This is the place to be to:

- ✓ Get access to MULTIPLE, proven marketing and moneymaking ideas that are directly applicable to selling more high-profit IT services, ideas you can take home and instantly apply to your business.
- ✓ Learn about NEW service models, NEW campaigns, NEW strategies and NEW opportunities emerging right now for IT services businesses.
- ✓ Get a SERIOUS injection of motivation by hanging out and networking with some of the smartest, most successful and fastest-growing IT business owners in the industry.

Early-Bird Discounts End March 3rd. Full details are at:
www.RobinsBigSeminar.com